IN THE CLAIMS:

Please rewrite claims 1 and 8, as follows:

1. (Currently amended)   A method of operating a conditional access network wherein providers distribute valuable contents over the network and end-users are allowed to access such valuable contents in function of individual access rights, wherein the valuable contents are made available to the end-users by way of a plurality of different conditional access systems, the method comprising the steps of:

configuring a generic conditional access component having a basic functionality common to all conditional access systems and a plurality of particular conditional access systems, said plurality of particular conditional access systems being preloaded but initially disabled;

providing the generic conditional access component to an end-user;

inserting a smart card comprising a conditional access identification;

identifying a particular preloaded conditional access system to be used by the conditional access component based on the conditional access identification;

acquiring by the end-user of a license related to the identified particular preloaded conditional access system;

loading said license into the conditional access component; and

enabling the particular preloaded conditional access system after successful verification of the license.

2. (Original)   The method of claim 1, wherein the valuable contents are distributed in a digital transport stream that contains Entitlement Management Messages "EMMs" specific to each conditional access system.

3. (Original)   The method of claim 2, wherein each conditional access component includes a filter unit for filtering out the specific EMMs of conditional access systems

enabled on the component and a verifier unit for the verification of access rights defined by the filtered specific EMMs.

4. (Original)   The method of claim 3, wherein the valuable contents in the transport stream are scrambled, each conditional access component has a descrambler adapted to process a scrambled transport stream into a clear transport stream, and the descrambler is enabled or disabled in function of a successful or unsuccessful verification, respectively, of the access rights.

5. (Original)   The method of any of claims 1 to 4, wherein each conditional access system has an associated application for execution by the conditional access component.

6. (Canceled)

7. (Canceled)

8. (Currently Amended)   A conditional access component for use in a conditional access network wherein a provider distributes valuable contents over the network and end-users are allowed to access such valuable contents in function of individual access rights defined by a user license, wherein said component comprises a first software module embedding a basic functionality common to a plurality of different conditional access systems used in the network, said module allowing a particular identified conditional access system to be enabled subject to successful verification of a license therefor, a plurality of preloaded specific application software, each constituting a particular conditional access system in conjunction with the basic functionality, a non-volatile memory for storing said plurality of specific application software, said particular preloaded conditional access systems being initially disabled in the non-volatile memory, a smart card inserted into said component, means on said smart card for identifying a particular conditional access system, means for acquiring a license for the particular identified preloaded conditional access system, and means for selectively enabling the particular identified preloaded conditional access system subject to a successful verification of a the corresponding license.

9. (Canceled)

10. (Previously presented)   The conditional access component of claim 8, wherein the valuable contents are distributed in a digital transport stream that contains Entitlement Management Messages "EMMs" specific to each conditional access system, and comprising a filter unit for filtering out specific EMMs of conditional access systems enabled on the component and a verifier unit for the verification of access rights defined by the filtered specific EMMs.